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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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PRESIDENT'S HYDROGEN BOMB DECISION-NO 2HOW  
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INTRODUCTION: On 3 February, after a delay of three days, the Moscow radio issued its first and to date its only commentary on the President's hydrogen-bomb decision. It has been broadcast in several languages to the Western world; but, as yet, it has not been monitored in any of the Soviet-orbit languages. Partially paralleling the initial Soviet-controlled German reaction, the Soviet commentator Petrov concentrates on the theme that the decision represents a new American blackmail attempt. He also alludes to the "horrors of a new war" that cannot be escaped "if such a war is unleashed by the U.S. imperialists." And he speaks of the need for "adjusting" American-Soviet relations, but associates this with "adoption of the peace-loving Soviet proposals and banning of the atomic weapons...." The Soviet commentator does not explicitly consider the questions of priority or monopoly in the field of hydrogen-bomb development; but Satellite radios in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Soviet-controlled Germany, following the latter's initial lead, take pains to remind listeners that "the hydrogen bomb is a variety of the atomic bomb; and just as the latter one is no secret, the former one will not remain secret." Radios outside the Soviet sphere continue generally to approve the President's decision as "inevitable." Pleas for a further attempt to secure agreement on international atomic-energy control are heard; but there are also some warnings against complete reliance on such agreement, even if it could be achieved.

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"HONEYMOON OF THE HYDROGEN-BOMB BOGEY": Although Petrov avoids explicit reference to priority and monopoly of hydrogen-bomb development, he does make some remarks that could be interpreted as very indirect allusions to the subject. His opening statement, for example, identifies the hydrogen bomb and the atomic bomb in the following manner: "In the same way as the U.S. atom bomb was once in vogue, now it is the new hydrogen bogey that is enjoying its honeymoon." He also uses the phrase, "the myth about the hydrogen bomb"; and his warning that the West cannot escape the horrors of a new war if unleashed by the "imperialists" may give some listeners the impression that the Soviet Union has or will have available the same kinds of weapons that the "imperialists" may use. The Satellite radios, considerably more outspoken, recall explicitly the American "delusion" about the atomic-bomb monopoly which was broken by the Soviets and predict similar failure for the current hydrogen-bomb "blackmail."

AMERICAN AIMS--(1) TO RATIFY THE "AGGRESSIVE WAR BUDGET": Petrov interprets the President's decision as part of a "new attack of war hysteria... (which) is needed by Wall Street both for its domestic and its foreign aims. Domestically, it is allegedly designed to heighten the atmosphere of tension "in order to put through the aggressive war budget at a time when the U.S. is not threatened by anyone...."

AMERICAN AIMS--(2) TO REASSURE AMERICANS OF "AN EASY PUSHBUTTON WAR": This is said to be "another secret purpose" of the President's decision. "The U.S. imperialists want to make their people swallow the idea of the possibility of an easy push-button war which would allegedly demand no sacrifices at all on the part of the U.S. but would be something in the nature of an air promenade of bombers--like a U.S. version of Hitler's notorious blitzkrieg." (This is consistent with the standard line of Radio Moscow which previously, but infrequently, has pointed to the importance of manpower in warfare--as did an initial Soviet-controlled German comment on the President's decision.) Petrov, however, does not elaborate. But he does warn that it will be impossible to escape the horrors of a war that may be unleashed by the U.S. imperialists' use of either "atomic diplomacy or the hydrogen bomb." He also proclaims that although "the camp of peace and democracy stands opposed to war,... it is firmly confident of its strength (and) its final victory should war be unleashed."

AMERICAN AIMS--(3) TO INTIMIDATE THE FAINT-HEARTED ABROAD: "The myth about the hydrogen bomb," says Petrov, "is also intended for export beyond the borders of the United States. American diplomacy, which failed so completely with its atomic blackmail, is looking for a new bogey to scare the faint-hearted." Consequently, the "hydrogen bogey" has been seized upon by all the warmongers, "frightened as they are by the mounting popular movement for peace." But since Wall Street was not able to alarm the peoples of the world by the atom bomb, it is concluded that it will be equally unsuccessful with "its fairy tales about the hydrogen bomb. The champions of peace are not the kind to be frightened easily."

THE NEED FOR PEACEFUL AMERICAN-SOVIET COOPERATION: Toward the end of Petrov's commentary, he considers the desirability of "adjusting" American-Soviet relations--which desire he attributes to "ever wider masses of Americans (who) demand... the banning of the atomic weapons and the establishment of strict international control over this ban." Having thus defined the Soviet position as the only right one, he concludes: "The U.S. people understand that only on the basis of peaceful cooperation between the United States and the USSR and the countries of People's Democracy in Europe and Asia on the basis of cooperation between all countries can peace be secured." This theme is echoed occasionally in Satellite comment. And TAEGLICHE RUNDSCHAU, Soviet army organ in Berlin, recalls that exactly a year ago Stalin submitted to Truman a proposal for a joint meeting.

INADEQUACY OF ANY AGREEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC-ENERGY CONTROL: From Western radios come occasional warnings against staking too much on the idea of securing international control. They are based primarily on the assumption that any agreement would probably be circumvented by the Soviet Government. "I do not think the Americans could ever bring themselves to trust Soviet Russia," says a Manila commentator, "or to believe that somewhere in some secret corner of that forbidden land the Soviet Government was not violating the agreement."

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